

REMARKS**I. General**

Claims 1-8 and 10-27 were pending in the present application. Claims 1-8 and 10-21 are indicated as allowed in the present Office Action (mailed January 13, 2005), and claims 22-27 stand rejected. The outstanding issues raised in the current Office Action are:

- Claims 22, 23, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,368,121 issued to Ueno (hereinafter “*Ueno*”); and
- Claims 24, 25, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Ueno*.

In response, Applicant respectfully traverses the outstanding claim rejections, and requests reconsideration and withdrawal thereof in light of the amendments and remarks presented herein.

II. Rejection of Claims 22-27

Independent claim 22 is amended herein to recite, in addition to its other elements, “electrically coupling a blade to a first circuit board via a first connector mechanism that electrically couples a first conductive pad of said blade to said first circuit board and a second connector mechanism that electrically couples a second conductive pad of said blade to said first circuit board, wherein said first and second connector mechanisms are off-set from each other” (emphasis added).

Applicant respectfully submits that *Ueno* fails to teach or suggest coupling first and second pads of a blade that are arranged directly opposite each other on opposing sides of an insulator (as recited by claim 22) to a circuit board via connector mechanisms that are off-set from each other. In all instances in *Ueno*, the first and second pads of a blade, such as a signal contact 23-1 and signal contact 23-2 of a given plug connector in the plug connector array 22, are coupled to a circuit board via connectors that are arranged directly across from each other.

Accordingly, because *Ueno* fails to teach at least the above-identified element of claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 22 is not anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) by *Ueno*. Therefore, Applicant requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 23-27 each depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 22, and thus inherit all limitations of independent claim 22. It is respectfully submitted that dependent claims 23-27 are allowable at least because of their dependency from independent claim 22 for the reasons discussed above.

III. Conclusion

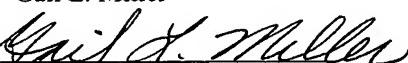
In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 08-2025, under Order No. 200209136-1 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

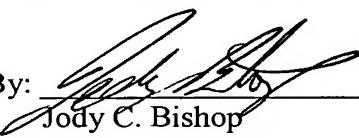
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Date of Deposit: March 29, 2005

Typed Name: Gail L. Miller

Signature: 

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Jody C. Bishop
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 44,034
Date: March 29, 2005
Telephone No. (214) 855-8007